

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

OCT 04 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

65. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article comprising:

first and second portions fastened together by a releasable fastener device;

wherein the releasable fastener device comprises shape memory material and is in the form of a female element threadedly engaged with a complementary male element through a first threaded engagement region of the shape memory material provided on one of the female element and the male element and a second threaded engagement region provided on the other one of the female element and the male element;

the threaded engagement region of the female element radially grips the threaded engagement region of the male element; and

the releasable fastener device is operative upon shape transition to change the cross-sectional shape of the first threaded engagement region to radially move the first threaded engagement region clear of the second threaded engagement region so as to release the threaded engagement between the male and female elements and leave the male element free to withdraw from the female element without having to be unscrewed therefrom.

66. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 65, wherein the first threaded engagement region of the shape memory material is provided on the female element.

67. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 66, wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.

68. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 66, wherein the shape memory material is operative to change the cross-sectional shape of the first threaded engagement region provided on the female element from generally oval to generally round, in order to increase the minimum radial dimension of the cross-section and thereby release the male element.
69. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 68, wherein the female element comprises a generally annular member, and wherein the shape memory material is operative upon shape transition to cause the female element to lengthen in a generally axial direction and concurrently to enlarge the inner diameter of the female member, thereby to release the threaded engagement with the male element, and to generate a separation force in the axial direction.
70. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 69, wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.
71. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 66, wherein the female element comprises a generally annular member, and wherein the shape memory material is operative upon shape transition to cause the female element to lengthen in a generally axial direction and concurrently to enlarge the inner diameter of the female member, thereby to release the threaded engagement with the male element, and to generate a separation force in the axial direction.
72. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 71, wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.

73. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 65, wherein the first threaded engagement region of the shape memory material is provided on a shank of the male element.
74. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 73, wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.
75. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 73, wherein the shape memory material is operative to change the cross-sectional shape of the shank from generally oval to generally round, in order to decrease the maximum radial dimension of the cross-section, and thereby release the threaded engagement with the female element.
76. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article according to claim 75, wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.
- 77-92. **(CANCELED)**

93. (NEW) An assembly for an article comprising:

first and second portions fastenable together by a releasable fastener device secured to one of the first and second portions;

wherein the releasable fastener device is defined by a female element formed of shape memory material, the female element being engageable with a threaded male element, the female element including a female engagement region able to grip a threaded male engagement region of a male element, the female engagement region being operative upon shape transition to change from a firm radially tensioned form to a relaxed untensioned form;

wherein said change of form of the female engagement region is arranged to radially move the female engagement region clear of the male engagement region so as to release the engagement between the male element and the female element and leave the male element free to withdraw from the female element without having to be unscrewed therefrom.

94. (NEW) An assembly for an article comprising first and second portions fastenable together by a releasable fastener device secured to at least one of the first and second portions, the releasable fastener device being defined by a female element:

- a. including a female engagement region having an inner space wherein a male element may be received, and
- b. being formed of shape memory material,

wherein the female engagement region, upon shape transition, changes between:

- (1) a radially tensioned form wherein the male element is closely received within the inner space with the female engagement region gripping the outer surface of the male element, and
- (2) a relaxed form wherein the male element is withdrawable without interference from the inner space of the female element.

95. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the inner space changes its shape configuration upon shape transition.
96. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the inner space, upon shape transition, changes between an at least substantially circular cross-section and a noncircular cross-section.
97. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the inner space, upon shape transition, changes between an at least substantially circular cross-section and an at least substantially oval cross-section.
98. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the inner space is defined by an elongated passage, and wherein the length of the passage changes upon shape transition, with the female element urging the male element from the inner space when transitioning from the tensioned form to the relaxed form.
99. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the inner space is threaded.
100. (NEW) The assembly of claim 99 wherein the outer surface of the male element is threaded.
101. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the outer surface of the male element is threaded.
102. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein the shape memory material is a shape memory polymer.

103. (NEW) The assembly of claim 94 wherein:

- a. the inner space is defined by an elongated passage, and
- b. the female element defines an annular member extending about the inner space, and wherein the length of the passage is substantially greater than the thickness of the annular member defined between the inner space and the outer surface of the annular member.